# THE STAR

RADIATING THE LIGHT OF TRUTH ON HANSEN'S DISEASE

Merry Christmas

New Year Greetings

Vol. 7 No. 3
December, 1947
Carville - - Louisiana

# RADIATING THE LIGHT OF TRUTH ON HANSEN'S DISEASE.

*Published monthly by patients of the United States Marine Hospital, National Leprosarium, Carville, Louisiana*

The views expressed in THE STAR are those of the patients of the U. S. Marine Hospital, Carville, Louisiana, and not necessarily those of the Medical Staff except in the case of direct quotation.

Address all communications to THE STAR, CARVILLE, LOUISIANA.

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"In order that leprosy may be dealt with successfully on a comprehensive scale and before any large proportion of early cases will come voluntarily for examination, there must be a change in the attitude of the public toward the disease. Any scheme for the control of leprosy will depend for its success on an educated public opinion."

Recommendation of World Conference on Leprosy, Cairo Egypt, March 1938.

## Facts That You Should Know About Hansen's Disease

The medical world classes Hansen's disease as "feebly communicable." In the United States, endemic are foci limited to Louisiana, Texas and Florida. Outside of these states, Hansen's disease is so rarely communicated to contacts that from the public health standpoint it might be considered as practically a non-communicable disease. The Leprosarium at Carville was founded fifty-two years ago. To date not a single member of the medical or nursing staff has contracted the disease.

Doctors and nurses take very simple precautions, not comparable with those they would take in dealing with diphtheria, typhoid and other communicable diseases.

Visitors are admitted freely, nor are they required to take any special precautions.

Patients are permitted to visit their homes semi-annually for short periods.

FACTS, based on actual experience over a long period of years (the most valid scientific yardstick), furnish indubitable proof of the remoteness of the communicability of Hansen's disease.

Since Hansen's isolation of the bacillus, hundreds of attempts have been made to grow it in artificial media but to date none of these have successfully met the requirements for proof, and all attempted innoculations of animals have been unsuccessful to the same extent. No scientist in more than 145 recorded cases has been able to infect himself or other human volunteers by attempted innoculation of the germ.

* * * *

THE TRANSMISSION OF THE DISEASE IS THE BIG PROBLEM in Hansen's. Once that is determined, the 6,000 years old practice of imprisoning a person for life because he happens to be sick will be done away with.

This paper, and all outgoing mail, is sterilized before leaving the hospital. This is done only as a gesture of respect to the unconvinced and not because there is any scientific necessity for it.

Prints of pictures appearing in THE STAR may be purchased from J. P. Harris, Carville, Louisiana.

This activity is open to all interested patients. THE STAR in its entirety is hand-set by patients.

Subscribers, kindly notify us of change of address. THE STAR cannot be forwarded.

*It is particularly fitting that Sister Catherine, who has championed our cause for more than 3 decades, should bring this message to our readers. She has written so many fine articles about Carville and has made talks in our behalf before groups all over the country. When asked by a reporter what her outstanding impression was after 21 years of service in this hospital, her answer, compressed into one short sentence, expressed the very heart of our problem, "Mercy is no substitute for justice."*

* * *

Christmas gift!

There is a traditional custom, in certain sections of our country, that any member of the family who on Christmas Day anticipates another with the greeting, "Christmas gift", must be given a present; something in addition to the ones already hanging on tinsel trimmed trees, stowed away in bulging gay stockings, or piled beside holly decked mantels. The beginning merriment of the day is started by children or light-hearted adults, emerging suddenly from a hiding place, with the laughing cry of "Christmas gift!"; and their triumphant carrying off of the gift-forfeit. The game continues until the cry of "Christmas gift!" has made the rounds of the household —much as a lamplighter makes the circuit of his posts— and the candle of joy has been lighted in every heart.

Christmas gift! THE STAR calls it from its point of vantage, the editor's sanctum. Christmas gift! Right here, on our front page, we get the start of our readers.

*Christmas gift to our thousands of readers and*
*our tens of thousands of well wishers!*
*Christmas gift to the interested but timorous!*
*Christmas gift to the friendly but hesitant!*
*Christmas gift to the sympathetic but dilatory!*
*Christmas gift to those men and women in*
*every walk of life, who have so effectually*
*espoused our cause, putting hope in our hearts,*
*certainty in our vision, weapons in our hands,*
*Christmas gift to all! And so we establish*
*our claim to yet another present.*

Don't reach for your check book, for it cannot be paid for so easily. Don't open your purse, for gold and silver cannot buy it. Don't say it is unprocurable, for it is in every man's market. Don't say it is sold out, lest you sell out yourself. Don't say you can't give it, for you have already demonstrated that you can.

Christmas gift! We want a pledge, more valuable to us than a gilt-edged government bond, that having, like the Wise Men of old, followed THE STAR, you will follow it, even as they did, until your quest is successfully ended. Follow THE STAR until the leaven of truth it disseminates, has made wholesome the loaf for every man, woman, and child who contracts Hansen's disease.

Only Wise Men follow stars, and only little villages attract them. Bethlehem, in its time, was more remote from the lanes of men, than Carville is today. But it was over Bethlehem that the star hung pointing out unerringly that Truth was there. It marked the end of one journey for the Wise Men, the beginning of another. For touched by Truth, they "returned another way into their own country", there to tell of the wonders they had witnessed.

Modestly, humbly, diffidently, THE STAR dares an analogy. THE STAR has brought Carville to the attention of the nation, with its avowed mission of "shedding the light of truth on Hansen's disease". May those who have followed THE STAR thus far, imitate the Wise Men of two thousand years ago, and, in their own communities, spread the truth that THE STAR has taught them. Be a Wise Man. Follow THE STAR.

Christ gift!

# RESEARCH AND EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES IN COMBATING LEPROSY

*Col. G.H. Rarey, Decatur, Georgia*
Vice-President, American Federation of the Physically Handicapped

* * * *

*This paper was read by the author before the Health Education Section of the American Public Health Association at the annual convention in Atlantic City in October.*

* * *

In this discussion we are concerned only with Research and Educational Objectives in The United States. Research efforts in any disease are normally directed toward the advancement of knowledge concerning the unknown factors inherent in the disease under investigation, and the discovery of arrestment, curative and preventive medicines and techniques of value in bringing the disease under control.

And so it is with leprosy, or Hansen's disease, as it is sometimes called, and the present important research objectives in combating this disease, according to our leprologists, requires continued investigations directed toward the discovery of:

1. The cause of the leprosy bacillus, and the method, or methods by which the disease is transmitted.

2. A suitable method or means for detecting the presence of the germ in the early stages of its unusually long incubation period, in order that patients may have the advantage of early treatment, and to facilitate the discovery of the disease among persons who bring new cases into this country from foreign endemic areas.

3. Faster-acting and more effective medicines and techniques for the arrestment of all types of leprosy, to the end that the disease may be halted in its early stages, and that its power to mark, cripple and blind the patient may be reduced or overcome.

4. Improvements of methods for differentiating, in diagnosis, between symptoms of leprosy and syphilis, tuberculosis and other diseases, in order that leprosy patients may not waste their precious time and suffer possible harm, as a result of an inaccurate diagnosis, and incorrect treatment.

5. Preventive medicines and techniques for combating the disease, particularly among children and others in our endemic areas.

6. The effect of climate upon the ability of leprosy to maintain itself and spread. The research objectives mentioned are not presented as a complete list of the things we need to learn about leprosy. However, if, by intensifying and expanding our research activities the answers to these questions could be found, the days of the leprosy germ would be numbered.

EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES: The educational objectives in combating leprosy are believed to be unique, in that they must cover not only the medical side of this problem, but must deal, as well, with the extremely harmful public attitudes toward this misunderstood disease. Where we should have one problem, and that a health problem based solely upon the disease, we find that, in this instance, due to misconceptions in the minds of most of our people, we have a health problem firmly linked to a social problem of long standing. It has been found that we cannot expect to make satisfactory progress with the health problem unless we also treat the social problem. The social problem is based upon the leprosy stigma, and it is evidenced by the public's unreasonable fear of this feebly communicable disease. The stigma is a parasitic growth attached to leprosy in ancient times. It is not based upon facts, but it has been and still is well supported and perpetuated by superstitious fear, the direct result of ancient ignorance concerning the communicability of leprosy, and means for treating it.

Leprosy patients state that the stigma and public fear of the disease are worse in their effect upon persons who have contracted leprosy, than the disease itself. These patients are made to feel that the term "leprosy" is associated in the public mind with the terms "Unclean", and other untrue and harmful stigmata. In addition to the harm brought to these innocent sick people and their families, the effect of the stigma has been to slow down and hinder many attempts to improve the leprosy situation in this and other countries.

Due largely to this unjustified public attitude and reaction toward the disease and its victims, an unknown number of persons with leprosy are concealing information concerning their disease. Before the doctors can find and treat those who are aware of their disease, these victims must be relieved of their fear of public reaction to leprosy. BUT, before this can be accomplished, the public must be relieved of its unreasonable and unjustified fear of the disease. This unusually difficult situation indicates how firmly the social problem is linked to the health problem. Obviously, this cycle of fera

and ignorance must be broken if leprosy is to be brought under control in the United States. Leprologists, with long experience in the leprosy field, have all agreed that the social side of this problem is one of the greatest, if not the greatest difficulty to be overcome in effecting the control of the disease in this country.

However, it is my belief, that if both sides of the leprosy problem are brought out into the open, where the people can get a look at them, by means of a properly planned educational program based upon our present knowledge of the disease and its treatment, the difficulties presented by the social side of the problem can be overcome; that when our people learn the truth about this heretofore little discussed malady, public fear and ignorance will yield to knowledge of the facts; that the stigma can and will be banished; that understanding and sympathy for those who, through no fault of their own, contract the disease, will replace the urge to ostracize; that an enlightened public opinion and a civilized, cooperative attitude toward leprosy patients will encourage those who are concealing their illness to reveal it and apply for the improved treatment now available, and in this way the disease will gradually be brought under control in this country.

Before listing details of the main educational objectives, a reference must be made to another serious difficulty faced by leprosy patients which must be considered and corrected before any plan to control leprosy can succeed, and before treatment for this disease can be administered under the most favorable circumstances. I approach this subject with considerable trepidation in an assembly of medical experts to whom the nation is indebted for so much good work in the many fields of medicine. However, in the interests of the present and future American victims of leprosy, I must refer to the difficulty encountered by such patients in obtaining a correct diagnosis of their disease, especially during its early manifestation and before it has gained a serious hold upon them.

It appears that many physicians have not encountered leprosy, that others have not recognized it, and many others, engrossed in combating more prevalent diseases, have not considered leprosy of sufficient importance to qualify in its diagnosis. Reports indicate that in numerous instances, erroneous diagnosis has seriously affected the chances for arrestment.

The time limit for this paper will not permit an amplification of this general statement. However, in this connection, I desire to refer you to a one-page paper upon this subject which has been made available for distribution here, entitled "Hansen's Disease, A Challenge to the Medical Profession", which describes the diagnostic problem faced by our leprosy patients, and to an accompanying one page paper on "Diagnostic Methods in Leprosy", by Dr. Frederick A. Johansen the present Medical Officer In Charge of the National Leprosarium, who is a recognized authority on leprosy. This paper gives an excellent outline of the steps used and recommended by Dr. Johansen in diagnosing the disease.

Among the educational objectives in combating leprosy there would be included the following items which, it is believed, can only be attained through an Educational Program, nation-wide in scope. initiated by the Public Health Service, and carried on in cooperation with the American Public Health Association and other National and State Health Associations, and State Health Departments.

Such a program should be designed to:

1. Make available to all physicians engaged in the general practice of medicine authentic information upon the latest approved methods of diagnosing and treating leprosy.

2. Interest the Staffs of Medical Colleges concerned with communicable diseases in re-examination of their curriculum pertaining to leprosy, to determine whether or not it provides sufficient basic training to enable graduates to qualify in the diagnosis and treatment of the disease.

3. Provide Nurse Training Institutions with such pertinent information concerning leprosy and its treatment, as is needed by nurses in their professional duties.

4. Obtain the cooperation of both physicians and nurses in providing "Treatment for the patient, as well as the disease", and thus aid in solving the social side of this health problem.

5. Tell the American people the truth about leprosy. Let them know that a large percentage of leprosy cases *are not communicable;* that the remaining cases are now classified as being "feebly communicable"; that leprosy is less communicable than tuberculosis and a number of other diseases: that leprosy is not an "unclean" disease; that it is not sent as a punishment for wrong-doing; and that it is not now a hopeless disease.

Inform them that in over 50 years of treating and caring for leprosy patients at the Louisiana leprosarium, not one doctor or nurse contracted the disease, and that no scientist in over 145 recorded cases has been able to infect himself or

*continued on page 11*

# HOSPITAL HOST TO 40 & 8 LEADER

*"When in Rome do as the Romans do"--here is Guy Land astride one of the patients' bikes THE mode of transportation in Carville. Edgar Wright stands by.*

*Voyageurs of Baton Rouge Locale 340 motored over to greet the Mississippians. Pictured in THE STAR office are: (seated) Guy Land; left to right Frank Nesom, G. B. (Buck) Kleinpeter, D. L. Spann, Edgar Wright and Howell May, Grand Chef passe, Grand Voiture du Louisiana.*

Guy Land of Clarksdale, Miss. an oustanding Southern Legionaire and Forty and Eighter, one of Carville's best friends. was in town Monday, November 24. Guy has visited us before but this time he came as Chef de Chemin de Fer of La Societe des 40 Hommes and 8 Cheveaux, meaning that he is the national president of the Forty and Eight. to which office he was elected at the National Promenade in New York City last August. If you are a regular reader of THE STAR you should know something about the Forty and Eight, the honor society of the American Legion. While this organization is the playground of the Legion, it also sponsors many worthwhile projects and THE STAR is proud and happy to be one of these.

Guy was in New Orleans over the weekend of November 23 where Voyageurs of Louisiana and Mississippi gathered to pay tribute to him and to initiate new members. Dr. Johansen represented our Voiture Locale at this meeting. Before his arrival in Carville, this modest "Guy" who calls himself the "little Red Head," asked that there be no formal gathering of Voyageurs, he just wanted to greet the fellows as he met them on the walks. Escorted by Chef de Gare Carpenter and Correspondant Percy Cambre of our Voiture Locale, he toured the hospital. Much of his time was spent in THE STAR printing plant, conferring with the staff, looking over the equipment and chatting with the boys and girls who were busy assembling the November STAR. He came to find out for himself just how badly we need that new press. He was convinced that we do need it--and soon.

In the evening, by happy coincidence, there was an entertainment in the theater and Guy took this opportunity to speak briefly to the patients just before curtain time.

We cannot overlook Edgar W. Wright of Centreville, Miss., who accompanied Guy Land to Carville. Voyageur Wright, about 300 pounds of geniality, is Cheminot National 1948 and Chairman of the Mississippi Grand Voiture Carville Hopital Committee.

As national leader of the Forty and Eight for 1947-48, Guy Land will fly all over the country, visiting Voitures, both Grand and Locale, but nowhere will his visit be more appreciated than was the day he spent at this hospital. We are indeed fortunate to have the very real personal interest of the "head man" of the organization which has already done so much for us.

The veterans who are patients in this hospital, 2 Spanish-American, 17 World War I, 20 World War II and one peace-time, service connected, are always generously remembered at Christmas time. Gifts come in from veterans' organizations and their Auxiliaries and from other patriotic groups all over the country. Following their annual custom, the vets will hold open house Christmas morning when the gifts, heaped under a huge tree, will be distributed.

*Place THE STAR in your public library*

# THE MAJOR GIVES OUR NATIONAL PUBLICITY A MAJOR PUSH

*Major Hornbostel's byliner was accorded wide use and top play in newspapers, Sunday, November 9. A number of papers gave it page one play and the feature showed a 60 percent pick-up in exchanges here, an unusually good showing.*

*N.J. Wing, General Editor, Associated Press Illustrated Newsfeatures. New York.*

Although Major Hornbostel has been very actively interested in our educational campaign since his wife became a patient in this hospital a year and a half ago, the AP feature referred to in the above memorandum was the first account to appear under his by-line for general publication.

Major Hornbostel's AP feature stressed that "Ignorance and prejudice cause infinitely more suffering than the disease itself" and he pointed out that Hansen's disease isn't the same thing that was mant by leprosy in the Bible.

The scope of the splendid educational publicity furnished by Major Hornbostel's story may be gauged by mention of some of the leading newspapers throughout the country which carried the piece on page one or in their magazine sections. These included: Seattle Post-Intelligencer, Detroit Free Press, New York Mirror, Los Angeles Globe-Examiner, St. Louis Globe Democrat, Iowa Journal, Chicago Tribune, Minneapolis Tribune, Portland, Me. Telegram, Houston Chronicle, Columbus Ohio Dispatch, Salt Lake City Tribune, Tulsa Daily World, San Antonio Express, The Washington Post, Atlanta Journal, New Orleans Times-Picayune, Milwaukee Journal, and scores of others.

Never before have the facts about Hansen's disease been brought to the attention of the American public as they have been by the Hornbostel case. The Major taking up his residence in the neighborhood of the hospital in order to visit his patient-wife daily was in itself nothing unusual here. Through the years many healthy husbands and wives, especially the latter, have done exactly the same thing. But the Major's Bataan background and Mrs. Hornbostel's prisoner of war record was "good copy" and the Hornbostel's themselves saw no reason for taking an assumed name or following any of the other traditional hush-hush which has contributed to a vicious circle, perpetuating archaic misconceptions. Thus the national publicity which the Hornbostel case has received, coupled with the candor of the Hornbostels themselves in calling a spade a spade has done more to cast out the stigma shrouding leprosy than any other single factor in this generation or before. In a sense the progress and hope which the Hornbostels have brought to the social aspect of Hansen's disease may be compared with the work the late F. D. R. did for infantile paralysis and Surgeon General Parran's educational campaign on syphilis.

As a result of Major Hornbostel's recent article letters have been pouring in from all over the country from people of all ages and in all walks of life, people are interested in learning the truth, there's no doubt about that. Here is an excerpt from a sample letter:

As a nurse, I have always been interested in Hansen's disease, but didn't know much about it or Carville until you and Mrs. Hornbostel went there to live. Until then I hadn't realized how little the general public knew. My first attempt at informing the public left me stunned and only then did the full meaning of the word uninformed come to me. Now, just when my neighbors are beginning to take an interest in Hansen's disease, your article appeared in the papers and when something is on the front page, people HAVE to read it and then they can't help but LEARN about it.

Dorothy Grimshaw, Registered Nurse,
Los Angeles, California.

If everyone who read Major Hornbostel's article was as enlightend as I was, I feel sure it will go a long way toward changing the general ideas concerning Hansen's disease.

Clara Batdon, Librarian
St. Louis, Mo.

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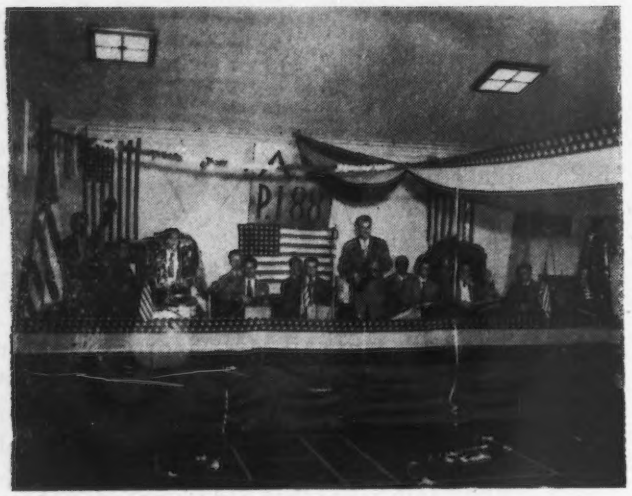
The seven boys who are patients in this hospital have a brand new interest and a very exciting one, too. They have been organized into a Boy Scout Troop. Preliminary arrangements for the troop were made on November 19 when William J. Beard, Assistant Scout Executive for the Istrouma Area, came down from Baton Rouge with George Wilkes and Frank Nesom to confer with a group of local Legionnaires. Ray Morgan, Hospital Recreational Aide, has been appointed Scout Master and Benjamin, Assistant. The troop is sponsored by Marine Hospital Post 188. The boys will have Scout uniforms, pup tents and other Scout paraphernalia along with a camp site on the reservation.

## CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

Dr. and Mrs. F.A. Johansen wish to take this opportunity to extend to THE STAR Staff as well as every patient, also the many patients who have been discharged, the Seasons Greetings. May the New Year bring us new advances in the treatment and care of Hansen's disease.



Picture above is Ned Betts' 13 piece orchestra of Baton Rouge which played for a dance here on Nov. 11. The band was furnished through the courtesy of the American Federation of Musicians, Local 583. On December 12 we anticipate Mark Cavell and his band for another grand evening of dancing. Cavell's band is to be furnished through the courtesy of the same Musicians' Local. These dances are deeply appreciated by the entire patient body.

The patients of this hospital are sending to the patients in the leprosarium at Christiansted, St. Croix, Virgin Islands surplus books to begin a library at that hospital. When Dr. Johansen returned from his visit to those patients he requested that this be done. THE STAR is happy to be able to defray transportation expenses and we hope the books will reach them for Christmas.

We are proud to have TB Christmas Seals on each of our December STARS. These are the gift of Mrs. L.L. (Steve) McCormick, Destrehan, Louisiana who is annually active in their sale as in all other worth-while projects the year round.

The young people of the Protestant Church met on the evening of Nov. 2 to form a YOUTH FOR CHRIST organization. The following officers were elected: David, Pres.; Paul Jang, Vice-Pres.; Benjamín, Sec.-Treas.; Viola, Ass. Sec.-Treas. and Miss Ruth, Advisor.

## ESSO MINSTREL AND REVIEW

It was a treat to have the Esso Minstrels and revue entertain us on November 24. The chorus was one of the real show-stoppers. From the first note of their opening selection, "Sing Hallelujah", they impressed us with their enthusiasm and spirit. Through their presentation of old favorites and some of the new, they observed a fine sectional balance, tone quality and phrasing under direction of Professor Loren B. Davidson of Louisiana State University. Their rendition of the amusing "Dry Bones" with the fine background accompaniment of pianist Robert K. Dix, was one of the highspots of the evening. Mr. Dix later played several solos, the first of which was "Malaguena" by Lecuona. His playing was enjoyed tremendously and we wish that we could have heard more. Mr. Dix was also a member of the quartet. The interlocutor for the occasion was Mr. B. F. Anderson, while the end men were B. H. Waddill, Benny Day, Jimmie McCurnin Jr., and "Flivver" Ford. There were several soloists and specialty acts including a barber shop quartet, a comedian, and vocalists N.J. Romero, J.F. Stuart and L. J. Bourdier. It would be a really grand Christmas present if the Esso chorus would return to sing carols at our Chritmas party.

For this treat we are again indebted to our good friend B.L. Spann of Baton Rouge whose name and this hospital are synonymous with entertainment.

*When you finish reading THE STAR will you please help us by passing it on to one of your friends.*

# CHRISTMAS IN CARVILLE

*"Peace on earth to men of good will"*

December is with us again, the poinsettias are in full bloom, shrubs are covered with red berries and despite the absence of cold weather we know from the exhilaration we are experiencing that Christmas can't be far away.

The Buick Estate Wagon, property of Marine Hospital Post 188, gift of the American Legion Auxiliary has given wonderful service during the more than a year that it has been in operation. It has traveled some 60,000 miles making about 150 round trips taking patients to and from their homes. The drivers are discharged patients and we think it is noteworthy that there has never been an accident of any kind. This year, with the limitations removed on the number of patients who can take vacations simultaneously, about 75 of us are heading homeward for nice long holiday visits.

For those patients who aren't going home, it will not be a dreary time, for beside the many big affairs going on, there will be many private parties and something doing most of the holiday season.

The Sisters are giving a Youth-of-Carville Christmas Party on Monday evening Dec. 22 in the music room. There will be a Christmas tree, Santa will be there with gifts, refreshments will be served and music and dancing will complete the evening of fun.

At 7 P. M. on Christmas Eve, BETHLEHEM, a three-act drama with eight scenes, will be enacted by a cast of twenty patients. The story of two orphaned brothers will be interwoven with that of the Christ Child's birth, presenting an entirely different version of the old, but ever new, story. The members of the B Natural Music Club will render carols between the scenes. Judging from past performances this play will be an inspiration to the entire patient body and our visitors as well.

In the past the holiday season has come to a close with a big New Year's Eve dance and we hope this old custom of seeing the old year out and welcoming in the new will be observed again.

We anticipate the New Year with hearts happy and hopes high for as the years roll along we can see our physical improvement and know that the end of our Carville sojourn can't be too many Christmases away.

A. P.

The mail is arriving later and Santa Claus' sled isn't loaded compared to our postman's truck these days. Know the express man at St. Gabriel must be curious about the numerous large boxes coming to us but then he probably doesn't know that there are to be gifts for every patient at our Community Christmas Tree and party on Sunday evening, Dec. 21.

Word comes from Lorraine Greinke of the Edgewater-Sunnyside Telephone Exchange of Chicago that the girls gathered on Dec. 3 to wrap the Carville gifts. Mae Fitzgerald of the Campbell Soup Co. of the same city, wrote that their gifts were also wrapped that evening and are we curious as to what's inside all those gaily bedecked packages. Shirley Mockus of Campbell's sold Christmas cards and all her profits went into gifts for our patients. We'd like to know personally all the girls at both the Telphone Exchange and Campbell's for we are sure they are tops.

We've just unpacked the entrance prizes and they are so lovely we're sorry we won't be present to have an opportunity of winning one of them. There is a desk lamp, hostess ice vault, electric hot plate, aluminum sandwich humidor, toaster and a swanky cocktail shaker and glasses. Any of them spell a wonderful addition to our rooms which are so much more homes than bedrooms.

Mr. and Mrs. Santa Claus have notified us they'll be on deck for the big evening. Entertainment is still in the planning stage so you'll just have to wait and be surprised.

Refreshments sound yummy— eggnog, cookies from the American Legion Auxiliary, chocolate candy from the Chicago girls and turkey salad sandwiches from the dietitian's office.

Decorations are giving us the most trouble but we are confident that on the big night the ball room will be a preview of Christmas in many places

## MY MOST MEMORABLE CHRISTMAS SEASON

*Gertrude C. Hornbostel*

"May God preserve your laughing nature, my child, you may need it." This was in February 1904 and my Great-aunt Ida gave me one more hug and kiss at the railroad station in Leipzig with Aunt Ella standing by to accompany me to Switzerland, where I was to be joined by my brother on the long journey to the Pacific. In those days ships did not have the speed with which modern oil burners travel and we expected to be on the way for six weeks. I hated to leave. I did not want to be parted from all my good school chums, from Aunt Ida's black poodle, my music studies nor from Aunt Ida herself, the good old soul, to leave for the unknown, even though my parents were waiting at the end of the trip. She had known since October that we were to leave, but had wisely postponed letting me know until Advent, at which time she obtained a little fir tree and fastened a candle to the top, which was lit every Sunday for the four weeks before Christmas, the last of which was my birthday, and ten extra candles were put on the tree instead of on my birthday cake and a big party was held, with all my friends and all the teachers attending and wishing me a happy journey, which was quite a boost to my ego.

We (my two sisters and I) received our presents on Christmas Eve in the big parlour to the tune of Silent Night on my mother's grand piano and Aunt Ella's well-trained voice. The tree reached from floor to ceiling with a hand carved Nativity arranged under its spreading branches. There was even a sausage for Aunt's poodle on the potted palm next to the piano. I received the most beautiful baby doll, blond and curly-haired and all made of wax. A dream to gladden the heart of any little girl.

The crowning glory of that season was the Christmas service at the Church of St. Thomas the next morning, but all I remember of the sermon were the last words: "Peace on Earth and Good Will to men." The rest was drowned out by what followed. The choir was formed of the singers among the boys who comprised the pupils of St. Thomas School, before their voices changed, and trained during the whole year for this one grand occasion, a repertoire of all the best Christmas songs, accompanied by their wonderful organ. I have never been so utterly carried away by any music as I was then. I was simply lifted right out of myself and into what came as close to heaven as I ever hope to get. I was completely unconscious of the well-filled church. There was no "I". There was only heavenly music.

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## STUDENTS SET STAGE FOR SANTA

With the coming of December a ceremony was introduced that is now firmly established in the routine of the schoolroom ♠ At the opening of the morning's program, the day's date on the large calendar in the front of the room is circled in red, insistently bringing before our eyes the fact that Christmas is just around the corner ♠

The true appurtenances of Christmas, a tree, presents and Santa Claus, have not appeared on the scene and yet the holiday excitement grows as the close of each day finds our ten pupils designing the decorations on the new project tables for their own tree and their own party ♠ This is the first time that the children have had their own tree in the schoolroom and they have been caught up in the spirit of Christmas, making the multi-colored chains, Santa Claus faces, and beaming cherubs that will be hung from the branches of the tree ♠ All this has added a festive look to the already bright-appearing schoolroom ♠ The windows are framed with yellow curtains on which the boys and girls have stenciled a flower design ♠ The comfortable chairs in the reading corner and music circle are looking very smart in their new colors of green and white ♠

At the beginning of the school year two new creative courses were added – art and music appreciation ♠ The stenciling of the curtains was the children's first major project and later for Halloween they designed and made their own masks with a horned Satan theme predominating ♠ Part of each Friday is given over to singing and listening to the records in our small collection ♠ We are now learning a few Christmas carols and hope to have the album of *Dicken's* "Christmas Carol" to play at their party ♠

The party will be held on Christmas morning ♠ While the children will decorate the tree, the decorations for the room will remain a surprise until they arrive ♠ They are very enthusiastic about having breakfast together and we plan to have something that is not served in the cafeteria ♠ Of course, the most exciting part of the whole morning will be the opening of their presents and there no doubt will be many as the children of Carville have always been remembered so well ♠

Barbara Jerris

## GRATEFUL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Parke, Davis & Company of Detroit, manufacturers of Promin, in appreciation of THE STAR's special Chemotherapy issue (September 1947) through their Vice-President E. Brier sent us a check for $200 to apply toward the purchase of a new stapler. (cost $300 FOB Wisconsin). This machine was ordered post haste for we have been forced of late to hand-staple THE STAR since the old one just folded up with "that's all folks".

One day late in November THE STAR staff was in the editorial office drawing up plans for the Christmas issue. A knock came at the door and one of the Sisters brought in three priests (two brothers and their nephew) the Reverends R.A. Nenderker, Leo Nenderker and Joseph L. Nenderker, all of Minnesota. We had a brief but pleasant chat and next day when assembling the November issue we received chocolate bars and cigars from the priests to lighten the task.

The state of Mississippi is determined to send in its Voiture checks on the press fund ahead of any other state as a tribute to Chef de Chemin de Fer Guy Land of Clarksdale. As of December 1 they had sent checks from the Grand Voiture, Yazoo City Voiture 900, Clarksdale Voiture 973, Hattiesburg Voiture 1137 and Hinds County Voiture 247 of Jackson. Edgar Wright, Carville Chairman, of Centreville is doing a fine job.

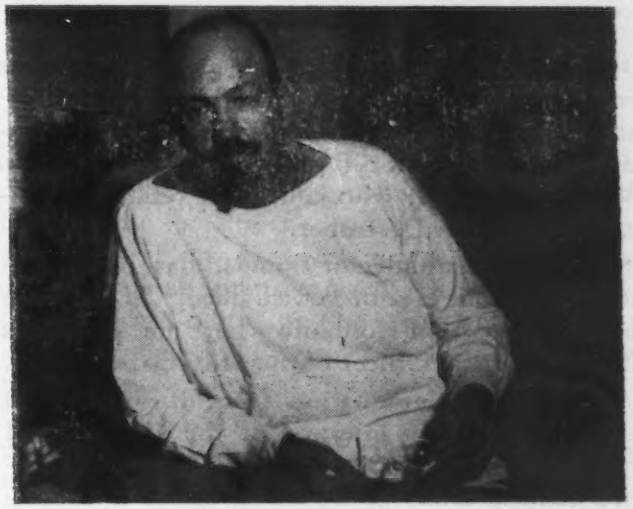
Georgia is as always very active. Wallace Blackley of Atlanta has devised a hollow Star for contributions at Voiture meetings and he even interests friends, who are not Legionnaires, like W. M. Todd of Atlanta, to help the cause. Georgia and George Starling, Carville Chairman, have a grand helper in Blackley.

The first check from South Carolina to be applied toward the press fund came from Anderson Voiture 1244 and in his letter Thos. C. Williams, Grand Correspondant, said others were in the making.

What a pleasant surprise was the letter from John H. Bell, Grand Chef de Gare of Missouri. He sent several subscriptions and a check from Voiture 448, St. Louis County, for the press fund.

Joe U. Rowley of San Antonio when renewing his subscription also sent an extra $5 on the press.

The General George A. Custer Unit 54, American Legion Auxiliary of Battle Creek, Michigan sent $5 for the press. Many more friends are helping us and more acknowledgements will appear in future issues.



Rev. Joseph M. Rick, CSC, Congregation of the Holy Cross of Notre Dame, who has spent almost 20 years in India as a missionary priest first visited here early in November returning for a longer stay at the close of the month.

On his second visit Father Rick showed movies and talked to us in the theatre about Indian customs. He is a speaker who holds his audience spellbound with tales of adventure and through it all you are cognizant of the very humaneness of the good Father and his love of mankind. Father Rick is on a year's vacation in the States after 11 years in India. He is raising money to begin an agricultural colony on the site of the Air Base Kumirtolla on the eastern end of the hump (where supplies were received during the war after flight over the Himalayas). It is planned that quarters will be provided where husbands and wives can be together even though one is well. The children's health will be protected by putting them in a home under the care of Catholic nuns. In India the government will provide a clinic in any area where 1% of the population has Hansen's disease. The Dacca District in Bengal, capital city of Pakistan, has a population of 200,000 with 5,000 cases in the city alone.

When asked about Gandhi, Father Rick said, "Gandhi is a saintly man who plays politics not for personal gain but for what he feels is the general good of all concerned."

Father claims the distinction of being the first native Texas priest to do foreign missionary work, the first Houston boy to be ordained a priest and the first priest in the United States to receive a Department of Commerce aviator's license. He returns to India in April.

♣♣♣♣♣

## WELCOME, DR. MEYER

The first-class medical care received by patients in this hospital, the best in the history of this institution, has been further augmented by the addition of another top-flight physician. He is Dr. William H. Meyer who joined our resident medical staff early in December.

Dr. Meyer, a native of Illinois, has been with the U.S. Public Health Service since1928. He came here directly from Honolulu where he served as District Medical Officer of the 14th Coast Guard.

Following his graduation from Rush Medical College, Dr. Meyer interned at the Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit. Since then he has had a varied medical career giving him a wealth of experience. Dr. Meyer worked at the Municipal Tuberculosis Sanitarium, Chicago, and the State Hospital for Mental and Nervous diseases, Alton, Ill. For a time he engaged in private practice in Lebanon, Ind. From 1932 to 1937 he was stationed in the South Pacific, his duties taking him to Samoa, Fiji, and many other islands. In 1937 he was transferred to the U. S. Marine Hospital in Boston, and from 1940 to 1944 he was Assistant Medical Director of the U. S. Employees Compensation Commission, Washington, D.C.

During his service in the South Pacific, Dr. Meyer observed and studied many tropical diseases. He has had no experience with Hansen's disease although he has seen some cases. "I have always been intensely interested in dermatology," Dr. Meyer said, "and I welcome this opportunity to work here.

Dr. Meyer has been assigned quarters on the station. Mrs. Meyer is with their son and daughter who are attending college in Bosman, Montana.

★

## NURSING STAFF CHANGES

After 13 years of devoted service to the patients of this hospital, Sister Mary Catherine has been transferred by her order, the Daughters of St. Vincent de Paul, to St. Vincent's Hospital, Sherman, Texas. The newcomer to our nursing staff is Sister Florence who came from St. Paul's Hospital, Dallas, Texas, where she was Superintendent of Nurses for five years.

★

An interesting caller on December 9 was Miss Jessie MacFarlane, Superintendent of Nurses, U.S. Public Health Service, Washington, D.C. It was Miss MacFarlane's second visit to this hospital

## DENTIST ON DUTY 25 YEARS

On December 22, 1947, Dr. Bernard Marcel Prejean, hospital dentist, will round out 25 years of continuous duty in this hospital, the longest record of service of any member of our resident medical staff. Dr. Prejean, a native Louisianan, was reared near Donaldsonville, Assumption Parish, within 15 miles of this hospital. He is a graduate of Loyola University, School of Dentistry, class 1918. Omicron Kappa Upsilon Fraternity has conferred on him an honorary medal for outstanding work in dentistry.

"I have found the patients very appreciative of all that is done for them," said Dr. Prejean. "And in the chaulmoogra oil era there was not a great deal that could be done in the dental line. But sulfone therapy has brought about dramatic changes. This is well demonstrated by the fact that oral mucosal lesions heretofore required more than 3,000 local treatments in the dental clinic annually, whereas, at present, less than 300 such treatments are given, and these are constantly diminishing and soon will be negligible."

Dr. Prejean is still working with the same dental chairs and other equipment that were here when he started a quarter of a century ago, and even then the chairs were second-hand. Naturally, he is hopeful of getting new equipment to carry on routine dental work for more than 400 patients.

Dr. Prejean is a member of the American Dental Association and has attended its conventions where he has presented papers and exhibits. On December 8 the senior class in dentistry of Loyola made their annual trip to this hospital. Dr. Prejean held a clinic for 25 students and reports that faculty and students now look toward this visit as a part of their dental course.

When not in the dental clinic Dr. Prejean may usually be found on the personnel golf course where he rates as champ, but occasionally he meets his Waterloo on the patients' course. When he is off the station, Dr. Prejean indulges in "the sport of kings", —his real hobby, and we have heard that some of his friends call him "Long Shot Benny". Politics, local and state, claim some of his attention. Active in community affairs, he is a member of Sunshine Post 312, The American Legion

Dr. and Mrs. Prejean have one daughter, Jacqueline, who grew up on the station. She is now Mrs. Aubrey LaPlace. Mr. and Mrs. LaPlace and their baby daughter, Catherine Jo, make their home with the Prejeans. Cathy's picture has the place of honor in Dr. Prejean's office.

## COL. RAREY

*continued from page 3*

other human volunteer, by attempted innoculation of the leprosy germ. Tell them that New York State does not require that leprosy be reported or quarantined. While it is reportable and cases are examined for confirmation of diagnosis in New York City, leprosy patients live and mingle with other people, and there are no restrictions upon their activities or employment except as professional food handlers, or in caring for children or the sick.

Let them know that, in the event a case of leprosy is discovered in their community, there is less occasion for apprehension than if it had been a case of tuberculosis, and that the health authorities will decide, depending upon the laws of the state concerned whether the patient can be treated in his home, or as an out-patient by hospital personnel, or as a hospitalized patient.

Advise them that medical science has discovered new and more effective medicines for treating this disease and that hospitalized patients are being discharged in increasing numbers with their disease arrested, and of no further menace to anyone. Inform them that, while these new medicines cannot be termed specific remedies, they have proven more effective in treating this disease than any previous treatment used at the leprosarium.

Tell them that leprosy cannot be disregarded with impunity; that early treatment greatly increases the chances for its arrestment, and inform them exactly how and where to apply for treatment.

Inform the public, and particularly the employers of the nation, that a person who has taken treatment for leprosy and has been discharged from treatment requirements following the arrestment of the disease, presents no health hazard to people with whom he associates; that employers need not, and should not hesitate to employ him, and that it is a negation of all decent concepts of brotherhood and civilized behavior to ostracize such a person since he has the same obligations to provide for his dependents, hence the same rights to employment, as well as the same rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness in THIS country, as is accorded any other citizen.

*NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS*

*When sending change of address to THE STAR give old address as well as new. This is necessary to locate your address in our files.*

## DOCTORS RENDER USEFUL SERVICE

News about and from former members of our resident medical staff is always interesting.

Dr. Sam H. Black, who served as hospital pathologist here from 1933 to 1941, is one of four Louisville, Ky., physicians being taught a new method for detecting some of the deadliest forms of cancer, according to the Louisville press. Recently, the doctors took an intensive two-week course at Cornell Medical College in New York under Dr. N. Papanicolaou, who invented the test in 1928. It has since been accepted authoritatively.

Dr. Johansen recently received a very interesting letter from Dr. F. D. McCreary who is with the American Occupation Forces in Wuertzburg, Germany. Dr. McCreary left this hospital in 1941 to enter the army after nine years of service here. Dr. McCreary wrote: "This is normally a cultural and educational center, the home of Roentgen, the city where the X-ray was invented. My quarters here are the former home of a German doctor who must have been a Nazi, as that is the type of quarters our government commandeers over here.

"I am the Commanding Officer of the hospital here, with a staff of 9 medical officers, 4 dental officers, 5 administrative officers, 12 nurses, a detachment of 125 soldiers and about 150 German civilian employees. We are running a 200 bed hospital in a building which could take care of 500, a former German army hospital. In addition I am Surgeon of the Wuertzburg Military Post, an area between 7000 and 8000 square miles.

"I think I will like this spot here. Lots of forest around, with hunting and fishing galore. Plenty of deer and wild boar with 30 minutes driving and mountain trout for the fishermen."

★

Perry Land, who has served as Personnel Officer of this hospital for the past two years, has been transferred to Los Angeles, Calif. Mr. and Mrs. Land left for their new station on November 8. In L.A., Mr. Land will be Personnel Officer at the Medical Relief Station in the Federal Building, associated with Senior Surgeon James R. Shaw, U. S. Public Health Service.

Mr. Land was well liked here. Before leaving he said, "If at any time I can be of service to the patients in Carville from California, I'll be glad to do what I can."

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# S O S

Are you one of those 600 readers whose subscription expires with this December issue of THE STAR? If you are you will find an expiration blank in your paper. When you fill out this blank for yourself why not clip the one at the bottom of this column for a friend.

For several months now we have been having from 200 to 300 expirations and there aren't nearly that many renewals coming in. All operation expenses of THE STAR are paid from subscription fees and it doesn't take a bookkeeper to realize that this is bad business. We need your renewals plus new subscriptions to carry on the paper at the standard we have set for it.

Christmas is the time of giving so why not give a subscription to THE STAR to your doctor, library, minister or friend. On this end we'll do our best to keep him interested for the whole year in Carville and its people.

Maybe you are wondering why the SOS at the beginning of this; true we aren't a ship, but we are in danger of submerging into the red side of our ledger so we ask each of you to help us SAVE OUR STAR and keep it floating in the black.

THE STAR

Published monthly by patients of the United States Marine Hospital, National Leprosarium, Carville, Louisiana.

The purpose of this publication is to:

*1- Promote an educated public opinion on Hansen's Disease*

*2- Furnish occupational therapy for interested patients.*

*3- Encourage and finance social service for needy patients.*

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# FURTHER FACTS

Despite the fact that among the many leprosaria scattered throughout the world thousands of well workers, religious and lay have been in daily association with the patients, the incidence of infection is very small. In some of these cases reasonable doubt existed as to whether the individual acquired the infection in the leprosarium. This is especially true when the infected person is a native of a section of the country where the disease occurs frequently or when the disease is known to have existed in the family. During its 52 years of existence, hundreds of persons from neighboring communities have been employed at the Carville Leprosarium as plumbers, painters, cafeteria help, clerical workers, laboratory technicians etc., with but one possible exception (a native of this endemic section) not a single member of the personnel has contracted the disease. This is a remarkable record, considering that this hospital is located almost within the heart of the most endemic section of the most endemic state in the Union and one would expect more cases to develop by sheer coincidence. What tuberculosis sanatorium can point to such a record.

In the much publicized case of Father Damien his biographers assert that "The good father never took any precautions against infection but lived continuously under unhygienic conditions." His successor, Brother Joseph Dutton, worked in daily intimate contact with patients for over 40 years without contracting the disease.

• • • •

In 1874 G. Armauer Hansen, a Norwegian physician, announced his discovery of the germ which causes the disease. In appearance and size it closely resembles the germ which causes tuberculosis, the tubercle bacillus. In single organisms it is impossible for the "Laboratory" to distinguish between the two germs.

• • • •

Hansen's is not included in the list of quarantinable diseases in New York State and patients in that State are subject to no restrictions (1 down, 47 to go).

• • • •

A man or woman may remain in perfect physical health for years after contracting Hansen's disease. Half the patients now at Carville could sit unnoted in any social gathering.

* * * *

The condition which should be officially known as Hansen's disease or by some other scientifically accurate and descriptive name is called "leprosy" because of an erroneous translation of the Bible. The Greek word "lepra" had been used in the writings attributed to Hippocrates to refer to a vague group of scaly conditions of the skin regarded as having no serious importance. The translators of the Hebrew Testament into Alexandrian Greek (the Septuagint) at about 100 B.C. used the word lepra in their effort to find a Greek equivalent for "Zaraath." The writers of the New Testament followed the example of the Greek Septuagint. The confusion between the Biblical and modern use of the word "leprosy" is a cause of suffering to thousands of people throughout the world.

Even a superficial reading of the thirteenth chapter of Leviticus is sufficient to convince any physician that the six or seven conditions which are defined under the Hebrew word "Zaraath" had nothing in common with what is called "leprosy" today. The repeated expression throughout the Old Testament, leprous as snow, may be applied to vitiligo or to psoriasis but could never by any acrobatics of the imagination be applied to infection with Hansen's bacillus.

The most characteristic features of infection with Hansen's bacillus (such as nerve involvement with loss of sensation in the extremities) are nowhere mentioned. The description of leprosy of garments and leprosy of houses should be conclusive proof that "Zaraath" is not the name of a disease and certainly not of the disease that we call leprosy.

The clue to the significance of this condition among the ancient Hebrews is to be found in the numerous cases in which leprosy is described as being an affliction which is the result of Divine displeasure (as in the case of Miriam) or as being a sign of Divine power (as in the case of Moses) or of being miraculously cured by bathing in the Jordan (as in the case of Naaman).

The word leprosy quite obviously was applied not to a disease of the skin but to a mark or blemish which rendered the person ritualistically unclean.

One important feature of leprosy as described in the New Testament confirms the view that it was thought of essentially as a mark of taboo. Other diseases in the New Testament are described as being "healed" or "cured." Leprosy, however, is described as being "cleansed."

When this simple, and we believe, true explanation of Biblical leprosy is understood and accepted, a great step will be taken toward the elimination of the irrational leprophobia of today.

*Dr. B. C. Lendrum, Assistant Professor of Medicine, University of Illinois, College of Medicine, Chicago; Dr. Everest L. McEwen, Rush Medical College, Chicago; The Jewish Encyclopedia, Vol. VIII; and other authoritative sources.*

# Christmas in Our Churches

## CHRISTMAS SERVICES IN THE SACRED HEART CHAPEL

### Christmas Eve

11:30 P. M.—Carols by the patient choir

12:00 P. M.—Solemn High Mass sung by Father Abbot Paul, Resident Catholic Chaplain, assisted by two visiting priests from St. Joseph's Abbey, St. Benedict, Louisiana

### Christmas Morning

7:30 A. M.—Three masses without interruption

## CHRISTMAS SERVICES IN THE UNION PROTESTANT CHAPEL

Clifton E. Rash, *Resident Chaplain*

2:30 P. M.—Sunday afternoon, December 21, Annual Christmas Gift Service. Baptist Choir of Gonzales, Louisiana, will be special guests.

9:45 A. M.—Christmas Morning—Worship Service—Special Music